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by J. Armstrong

THE
O E C O N O M Y
O F
L O V E.

A POETICAL ESSAY.

Insanire docet certa ratione modoque.


A NEW EDITION,
Revised and corrected by the Author.

L O N D O N,
Printed for T. DAVIES, in Ruffel-street, Covent-Garden.
MDCCLXXIV.

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THIS little juvenile Performance was chiefly intended as a Parody upon some of the didactic Poets; and, that it might be still the more ludicrous, the Author in some Places affected the stately Language of MILTON.



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T H E
O E C O N O M Y
O F
L O V E.

THY Bounties, Love; in thy soft Raptures when
Timeliest the melting Pairs indulge, and how
Best to improve the genial Joy; how shun
The Snakes that under flow'ry Pleasure lurk;
I sing: If thou, fair *Cytherea*, deign

8 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Gracious to smile on my Attempt. Tho' Thou
 None of the Muses Nine; yet oft on Thee
 The Muses wait, oft gambol in thy Train,
 Tho' Virgins. Come, nor leave thy Boy behind,
 Blind but unerring Archer. *Hymen*, raise 10
 Aloft thy sacred Torch: Your Gifts I sing.

YE Youths and Virgins, when your generous Blood
 Has drank the Heat of Fifteen Summers, now
 The Loves invite; now to new Rapture wakes
 The finish'd Sense: While, stung with keen Desire,
 The madd'ning Boy his bashful Fetters bursts; 16
 And, charm'd with secret Flames, the riper Maid,
 Conscious and shy, betrays her smarting Breast.

YET Nature not in all her Sons maintains
An equal Progreſs. This with kindly Warmth 20
Shoots up to manly Vigour ſtrait; while That
Pines crude and chill, and ſcarce at laſt attains
Imperfect Life. Some flight their varniſh'd Steed;
And (wond'rous Inſtinct!) bent on manlier Sport
Cope with the Maids. *Alcides* thus, they ſay, 25
Roſe brawny from his Cradle, while the Snakes
Hung hiſſing round him, horrible and fell;
Sent, by enrag'd *Saturnia*, to deſtroy
Her Rival's Hope: The mighty Infant graſp'd
His ſpeckled Foes, and, ſmiling, daſh'd them down
To Hell, their native Clime; the ſpumy Gore 31
Blotted the frighted Pavement. Early thus

10 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Was future Chivalry prefag'd.——Meantime,
Others slow ripen : Men there are, who scarce
Feel the soft Thrillings of untaught Desire ; 35
While pallid Maids scarce ruminatè on Man,
'Till Twenty : well if then. It boots thee much
To study the Complexion, much the Clime
And Habitudes of Life. Meanwhile, with me,
Credit these Signs. The Boy may triumph, when 40
Night-working Fancy steals him to the Arms
Of Nymph oft wish'd awake. Nor envy Thou
Waking Fruition, while such happy Dreams
Visit thy Slumbers ; liveliest then the Touch
Thrills to the Brain, with all Sensations else 45
Unshaken, unseduc'd.——The Maid demands
The Dues of *Venus*, when the parting Breasts

Wanton

Wanton exuberant and tempt the Touch ;
Plump'd with rich Moisture from the finish'd Growth
Redundant now : for late the shooting Tubes 50
Drank all the Blood the toiling Heart could pour,
Infatiate ; now, full grown, they crave no more
Than what repays their daily Waste. The Down
Then too begins to skirt the hallow'd Bounds
Of *Venus*' blest Domain. In either Sex, 55
This Sign obtains. For Nature provident,
Now, when both Sides stand equal for the Fray,
This graceful Armour spreads ; and, but for this,
Excoriate oft the tender Parts would rue
The close Encounter ; now they fight secure, 60
Thus harness'd, and sustain the mutual Shock
Of War, unhurt, for many a well-fought Day.

12 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

BUT if to Progeny thy Views extend
Paternal, and the Name of Sire invites ;
Wouldst thou behold a thriving Race furround 65
Thy spacious Table : shun the soft Embrace
Emaſculant, till Twice Ten Years and more
Have ſteel'd thy Nerves ; and let the holy Rite
License the Blifs. Nor would I urge, precise,
A total Abſtinance ; this might unman 70
The genial Organs, unemploy'd ſo long,
And quite extinguish the prolific Flame,
Refrigerant. But riot oft, unblam'd,
On Kiſſes, ſweet Repaſt ! ambroſial Joy !
Now preſs with gentle Hand the gentle Hand, 75
And, ſighing, now the Breasts, that to the Touch
Heave

Heave amorous. Nor thou, fair Maid, refuse
Indulgence, while thy tender Paramour
Aspires no farther : Thus thou may'st expect
Treasure hereafter ; when the Bridegroom, warm,
Trembling with keen Desire, profusely pours 81
The rich Collection of enamour'd Years,
Exhaustless, blessing all thy nuptial Nights.

BUT, oh ! my Son, whether the generous Care
Of Propagation, and domestic Charge, 85
Or soft Encounter more attract : renounce
The Vice of Monks recluse, the early Bane
Of rising Manhood. Banish from thy Shades
Th' ungenerous, selfish, solitary Joy.
Hold, *Saticide*, thy Hand ! For thee alone 90

Did

14 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Did Nature form thee? for thy narrow Self
Grant thee the Means of Pleasure? Dream'st thou so?
That very Self mistakes its wiser Aim;
Its finer Sense, ungratified, unpleas'd,
But when from active Soul to Soul rebounds 95
The swelling mingling Tumult of Delight.
Hold yet again! ere idle Callus wrap
In fullen Indolence th' astonish'd Nerves;
When thou may'st fret and teize thy Sense in vain,
And curse too late th' unwisely wanton Hours! 100
Impious, forbear! thus the first general Hail
To disappoint, *Increase and Multiply!*
To shed thy Blossoms thro' the desert Air,
And sow thy perish'd Off-spring in the Winds. 104
Unhallow'd Pastime!—Tho' the factious Chief

Oft brew hot Infurrection, rather lie
To Bagnio lewd or Tavern; nightly where
Venereal Rites are done, from *Draco's* Ken
Remote, and Light of Heaven (as erst retir'd
The heaving *Gallic* Saints to the kind Gloom 110
Of Clift, or Cave, or trusted Barn, to hold
Forbidden Sabbaths): rather visit thou
Those Haunts of public Lewdness; oft tho' there
Sore Ills difmay. Purfe, or the Golden Pride
That decks thy Finger, gorgeous with the Spoils 115
Of *Mexico*, *Peru*, and fartheft *Ind*,
Or Watch Time-meafuring, oft subtracted fly,
Sink in the dark Profound. And oft, to crush
Thy flacken'd Manhood in the mid Career
Of puiffant Deeds, untimely rushes in 120

16 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

A forward boist'rous Wight, and from thy Arms

The passive Spouse of all the Town demands.

Him, hung'ring after Gold, nor Words can charm,

Nor more persuasive Wine: thy Gold must pay

The Violation of the *public* Bed; 125

Or braver Steel must prove thy manly Arm,

In dubious Fight.—Yet well, if here could end

The Mis'ry: Worse, perhaps, ensues; a Train

Of Ills, of tedious Count, and horrid Name.

Such as of old distress'd the Man else squar'd 130

To God's own Heart, but that his Wiles debauch'd

Jerusalem's fair Daughters to his Flames;

Nor did he from the holy Marriage-bed

Refrain his loose Embraces, when the Wife

Of wrong'd *Urias* he seduc'd; nor stopt 135

'Till

'Till *Murder* crown'd his Love. Hence him the Wrath
 Of righteous Heaven, awaking, long pursu'd
 With fore Disease, and fill'd his Loins with Pain.
 All Day he roar'd, and all the tedious Night. 139
 Bedew'd his Couch with Tears; and still his Groans
 Breathe musical in sacred Song. What Woes!
 What Pains he tried!—But now this Plague attacks
 With double Rancour, and severely marks
 Modern Offenders: Slily undermines
 The Fame and Nose, that by unseemly Lapse 145
 Aukward deforms the human Face divine
 With ghastly Ruins. Tho' this Breach, they say,
 Nice *Taliacotius'* Art, with Substitute
 From Porters borrow'd or the callous Breech
 Of sedentary Weaver, oft repair'd: 150

18 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Precarious, for no sooner Fate demands
The Parent Stock, than (pious Sympathy !)
Revolts th' adopted Nose.—Such Ills attend
Obscene and bought Embraces. Wiser thou,

FIND some kind Nymph, whom secret Sympathy
Attracts to thee ; while all her Captives else, 156
Aw'd by majestic Beauty, mourn aloof
Her Charms, to them reserv'd, alone to thee
Discreetly lavish'd. Sacrifice to her
The precious Hours ; nor grudge with such a Mate
The Summer's Day to toy or Winter's Night. 161
Now clasp with dying Fondness in your Arms
Her yielding Waist : now on her swelling Breast
Recline your Cheek ; with eager Kisses press

Her

Her balmy Lips ; and, drinking from her Eyes

Resistless Love, the tender Flame confess, 166

Ineffable but by the murmuring Voice

Of genuine Joy ; then hug and kiss again,

Stretch'd on the genial Couch, while joyful glows

Thy manly Pride, and, throbbing with Desire, 170

Pants furious, felt thro' all the Obstacles

That intervene : but Love, whose fervid Course

Mountains nor Seas restrain, can soon remove

Barriers so slight. Then, when her lovely Limbs,

Oft lovely deem'd, far lovelier now beheld, 175

Thro' all your trembling Joints increase the Flame ;

Forthwith discover to her dazzled Sight

The stately Novelty, and to her Hand

Usher the new Acquaintance. She, perhaps,

20 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Averse, will coldly chide, and, half afraid, 180

Blushing, half-pleas'd, the tumid Wonder view

With Neck retorted and oblique Regard;

Nor quite her curious Eye indulging, nor

Refraining quite. Perhaps, when you attempt

The sweet Admission, toyful she resists 185

With shy Reluctance; nathless you pursue

The soft Attack, and warmly push the War,

Till, quite o'erpower'd with Love, the melting Maid

Faintly opposes.—On the Brink at last

Arriv'd of giddy Rapture, plunge not in 190

Precipitant, but spare a Virgin's Pain;

Ah! spare a gentle Virgin! spare yourself!

Lest sanguine War Love's tender Rites profane

With fierce Dilaceration and dire Pangs.

STILL

STILL hear me, *Lovers* ; all whose roving Hearts
 No sacred nuptial Chains have yet confin'd : 196
 Attentive hear ; and daily, nightly, weigh
 The Counsels sage, which, thro' my raptur'd Breast,
 To you th' auspicious heavenly *Muse* conveys :
 The *Muse*, no soothing Minister of Vice ; 200
 Tho' now in sportive Vein to youthful Ears
 She tunes her Song, to give Instruction Grace.
 Attend, ye Wise !—No frantic *Bacchanal*,
 No shameless Bard of the licentious Rout
 Of flush'd *Silenus*, sings.—What *Nature bids* 205
 Is good, is wise ; and faultless we obey.
 We must obey ; howe'er hard *Stoick* Dreams
 Of *Apathy*, much vaunted, seldom prov'd.

For

22 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

For oft beneath the philosophic Gloom

Sly *Lewdness* lurks, and oftener mazy *Guile*, 210

That with well-mimick'd Love th' unwary Heart

Lures to its Fate, and hails while it betrays.

There bloated *Pride* too dwells, and baneful *Hate*,

And dark *Revenge*; than which a deadlier Fiend

Ne'er poison'd mortal Breast, nor urg'd the Soul 215

To ruthless Purpose and inhuman Deeds.

Far hence be These! We know great *Nature's* Pow'r,

Mother of Things, whose vast unbounded Sway,

From the deep Center, all around extends

Beyond the flaming Barriers of the World. 220

We feel her Power: we strive not to repress

(Vainly repress'd, or to Deformity)

Her lawful Growth; Ours be the Task alone

To

To check her rude Excrescences ; to prune
Her wanton Overgrowth ; and, where she sports 225
In Shapes too wild, to lead her gently back,
With prudent Hand, to better Form and Use.

For wisest Ends this universal *Power*
Gave *Appetites* : from whose quick Impulse Life
Subsists ; by which we only live ; all Life 230
Insipid else, unactive, unenjoy'd !

Hence too this peopled Earth ; which, That extinct,
That Flame for *Propagation*, soon would roll
A lifeless Mass, and cumber Heaven in vain.

Then Love of Pleasure sways each Heart. and we
From that no more than from ourselves can fly : 236
Blameless when govern'd well. But, where it errs,

24 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Extravagant, and wildly leads to Ill,
Public or private, there its curbing Power
Cool *Reason* must exert.—This Lesson weigh, 240
Ye tender Pairs. Indulge your gentle Flames,
Each fondest Wish, and bathe your Souls in Love.
But let *Discretion* guide unruly *Bliss*,
Virtuous in Pleasure. So you shall enjoy
Pleasure unmix'd, and without Thorn the Rose. 245
This Caution scorn'd, beware th' Event perverse :
Expect, for *Pleasure*, *Pain* and sharp *Remorse* ;
For *Love*, *Aversion* ; and each broken Vow
The Jest of Fools, the Pity of the Wife !

Be secret, *Lovers*. Let no dangerous Spy 250
Catch your soft Glances, as oblique they deal

Mutual

Mutual Contagion, darting all the Soul

In missive Love; nor hear your lab'ring Sighs.

But chiefly when the high-wrought Rapture calls,

Impatient, to soft Deeds, then far retire 255

From ev'ry mortal Ken. *The sapient King*

(Whose Loves who could defame?) in the mild Gloom,

Deep in the Center of his Gardens, hid,

Held Dalliance with his fair Ægyptian Spouse.

Find then some soft obscure Retreat, untrod 260

By Mortals else, where thick-embowering Shades

Condense to Darknefs and embrown the Day;

There, safe from all prophane Access, pursue

Love's bashful Rites. For oft the curious Eye

Of prying Childhood, and th' Aspect malign, 265

Waning and wan, of Virgin stale in Years,

26 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Shed baneful Influence on the Rites of Love.

And thou, my Son, when Floods of mellowing Wine

And social Joys have loosen'd all thy Breast;

When every Secret gushes; this at least, 270

This one, reserve, of Love and bounteous Charms

Of trusting Beauty; venturing all for thee,

For thy Delight, her Fortune and her Fame;

For her thou nothing. Hold, ingrateful! hold 274

Thy wanton Tongue. Leave to the last of Fools,

Of Villains! that ungenerous Vanity,

Cruel and base, to vaunt of secret Joys;

Of Joys on thee, so vaunting, ill bestow'd.

Oh! dare not thus with mortal Sting to wound

The tender helpless Sex.—Does thy vile Breath 280

So blast my Sister's or my Daughter's Fame—

By

By Heav'n, thou dy'st : thy treacherous Blood alone
 Can wash my Honour clean.—Prudent meantime,
 Ye generous Maids, revenge your Sex's Wrong ;
 Let not the mean Destroyer e'er approach 285
 Your sacred Charms. Now muster all your Pride,
 Contempt, and Scorn, that, shot from Beauty's Eye,
 Confounds the mighty Impudent, and smites
 The Front unknown to Shame. Trust not his Vows,
 His labour'd Sighs, and well-dissembled Tears, 290
 Nor swell the Triumph of known Perjury.

MEANWHILE, my Son, if angry Fate, or Love,
 Grown indiscreet, or loud *Lucina*, tell
 Th' important Secret : Is thy Mate well form'd,
 Virtuous, and equal for thy lawful Bed ; 295

28 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Save her, I charge thee, from foul Infamy

And lonely Shame : let Wedlock's holy Tie

Legitimate th' indissoluble Flames.

If Birth too base, dishonourable, with Mind

Incultivate and vicious, to that Height 300

Forbid her Hopes to climb ; at least, secure

From Penury her humble State, by thee

Else humbled more, and to Necessity,

Stern Foe to Virtue, Fame, and Life, betray'd,

A helpless Prey.—Oh ! let no Parent's Woe, 305

No Complaints of trusting Innocence, nor Tears

Of pining Beauty, blast thy guilty Joys.

Shall she, so late the Softener of thy Life,

Thy chief Delight, whose melting Effence oft

Lay with thy melting Effence kindly mix'd 310

(As

(As far as Bodies and embodied Souls
Can mingle) ; she, who deem'd thy Vows sincere,
Thy Passion more than selfish, and thy Love
To her devoted, as was her's to thee ;
Shall she (Oh ! cruel Perfidy !) at last 315
When with her tainted Name the Winds grow sick ;
When envious Prudery chides, affecting Scorn
Of natural Joys, and they of *public Fame*,
Insulting, hail her Sister ; while each Friend
Disgusted flies ? shall she not find in thee 320
Unshaken Amity ? When to thy Arms,
Well-known, with wonted Confidence she flies,
To pour her Sorrows forth, and soothe her Cares,
Shall she then find thy faithless Heart from Home,
From her estrang'd ? At that disastrous Hour, 325

Wilt

30 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

Wilt thou ungently spurn her from thy Love ?

To waste in sickly Grief her once-priz'd Charms,

Forlorn to languish out her Life, to lead

Despis'd, unwedded, her dishonour'd Days ?

Or, if her barren Fortune, hard like thee, 330

Scowls meagre *Want* (whose Iron Empire *Pride*,

Reluctant, and her Off-spring *Modesty*,

Blushing at last obey), unskill'd in Arts

Of mercenary *Venus*, to increase

The rompish Band, that, without Pleasure lewd, 335

With deep-felt Sorrow gay, thro' *Trivia's* Reign

Nightly solicit Lovers ; oft repuls'd,

Oft, when invited to the barren Toil,

Thankless deserted by their slippery Loves.

Or to the Salt of Years, where tedious Lust 340

Uncouth

Uncouth and monstrous creeps thro' freezing Loins,
Patient submitted ; to the boist'rous Will
Of Midnight Ruffians, to abhorr'd Disease,
Hourly expos'd, and *Draco's* fiercer Rage.
Spare, mighty *Draco* ! spare a hapless Race, 345
By thy own Sex to Wretchedness betray'd !——
A Woman bore thee ; by each tender Name
Of Woman, spare !—Hast thou or Daughter fair,
Or Sister ? They, but for a happier Birth,
The Gift of Fate, and Honour's Guardian, Pride
Early inspir'd, had swell'd the common Stream : 351
While she whom now thy awful Name dismays,
Portentous heard from far, with Fortune's Smiles
And fair Example, might have grac'd thy Bed,
A virtuous Mate, in ev'ry Charm compleat. 355

A pious Duty next, neglected oft,
 Demands my Song. If from thy secret Bed
 Of Luxury unbidden Off-spring rise,
 Let them be kindly welcom'd to the Day.
 'Tis Nature bids. To Nature's sacred Voice 360
 Attend; and from the Monster-breeding Deep,
 The ravag'd Air, and howling Wilderneys,
 Learn Parent Virtues. Shall the growling Bear
 Be more a Sire than thou? An Infant once,
 Helpless and weak, but for Paternal Care, 365
 Thou had'st not liv'd to propagate a Race
 To Misery; to resign to Step-dame Fate
 Perhaps a worthier Off-spring than thy Sire
 Tenderly rear'd. For from the stol'n Embrace,

Untir'd

Untir'd with worn Acquaintance, keenly urg'd, 370

Elate with gen'rous Rapture, likeliest springs

The noblest Breed, most animated, best.

What Heroes hence have issued! what fam'd Chiefs

And Demi-Gods, of old! The Stealth of Love

Gave *Greece* her *Hercules*, and mighty *Rome* 375

First rose beneath a random son of *Mars*.

Thy Vigour too, the Blossom of thy Strength,

Reckless and wild profus'd, in dangerous Days,

Or in the Senate wise, and nobly warm

To Public Good, may save the rushing State; 380

Or, bold in Arms, may roll her Thunders forth

To shatter distant Skies, and, rous'd to Blood,

Lead on the *British Lion* to the Field.

Thy Country claims thy Care; nurse well her Hopes,

34 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

And thine; nor thou her Church's hungry Wolves,
Hight *Overseers*, with thy own Children's Gore 386
Sate, if Rapine know Satiety.

For, bred to Death, and of sagacious Nose,
A prowling Herd, lur'd with the recent Smell
Of secret Birth, their Carnage sweet, or led 390

By Infant Wailings, querulous, and shrill,
Beset thy frightened Gates. These timely thou
Prevent, or mourn too late thy ravish'd Gold

And captive Son; to the Street-dunning Tribe
Of Mendicants let out, fictitious Badge 395

Of low Distress: there, to what Life of Pain

Led up, who knows? to what disgraceful Fate,

What Gibbet, bred? Or, from his Parents' Arms,

With Nurse unpitying, unbenign, exil'd

To squalid Lodge, to find in *Famine's* Cave 400

A ling'ring Death; or, by a deadlier Hag

Than her that rides the lab'ring Night, oppress'd,

Untimely sink beneath a heavier Fate.

While they, the Sons of licens'd Rapine, screen'd

Under the Altar of the God of Life 405

With Murder stain'd, on what should raise thy Son,

Nightly regale, carnivorous; for them

The Heifer bleeds, or for her slaughter'd Young

Roams wild the woodland Bounds: and what

should now

To thy young Hopes in white nectareous Rills 410

Descend, to them in deep *Oporto* flows,

Or hot *Madeira*. Thus the sanguine Feast

They crown, nor dread the Cry of infant Blood.

36 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE

THESE Precepts wisely keep, by these direct
Thy Steps thro' Pleasure's Labyrinth. Unhurt 413
And unoffending, thus thy tutor'd Feet
May tread the Wilds of else-delusive Joy,
So shall no Sorrows wound, no ruder Cares
Disturb thy Pleasures, no remorseful Tears
Attend thy gay Delight: nor Sighs make way, 420
But such as heave the Pleasure-burden'd Breast;
As utter Love, with speechless Eloquence
Well understood; and breathe from Soul to Soul
The soft Infection, fondly still receiv'd.—
Almighty *Love*! Oh! inexhausted Source 425
Of universal Joy! first Principle
Of all-creating *Nature*! Harmony,

By

By which her mighty Movements all are rul'd !
 Soft Tyrant of each Element ; whose Sway
 Resistless thro' the Wilds of Air is felt, 430
 Thro' Earth, and the deep Empire of the Main !
 Thy willing Slaves, we own thy gentle Power,
 In us supreme, with kind Endearments rais'd,
 Above the merely-sensual Touch of Brutes.
 By thy soft Charm, the savage Breast is tam'd, 435
 The Genius rais'd. Thy heavenly Warmth inspires
 Whate'er is noble, generous, or humane,
 Or elegant ; whate'er adorns the Mind,
 Graces or sweetens Life : and without thee
 Nothing or gay or amiable appears. 440

YET not to Love (thus polishing the Soul,
 Thus charming ; tho' of every finer Breast

38 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE;

The fovereign Joy), yet not to Love alone
 Yield languid all your Hours. The self-same Cates
 Still offer'd soon the Appetite offend ; 445
 The most delicious soonest. Other Joys,
 Other Pursuits, their equal Share demand
 Of Cultivation. These with kindly Change
 Will cheer your sweetly-varied Days ; from these
 With quicker Sense you shall and firmer Nerves 450
 Return to Love, when Love again invites.
 Be those the least neglected, which adorn
 With Virtue, Sense, and Elegance, the Mind :
 Those what before was amiable improve,
 And lend to Love new Grace and Dignity. 455
 Life too has serious Cares, which madly scorn'd,
 The Means of Pleasure melt.—And Age will come,
 When

When Love, alas ! the Flower of human Joys,
Must shrink in horrid Frost. Oh ! hapless he !
Thrice hapless then ! whose only Joy was That : 460
Whose cruel restless Furies teize him now
To vain Attempts. Him the inclement Power
Of craving *Impotence*, to fonder Toys
Than other Dotage knows, or easy-dup'd
Credulity can well believe, incites. 465
Him all the Nymphs despise, and the young Loves
With leering Scorn behold ; while vigorous Heat
Has fled his shaken Limbs, surviving still
In his green Fancy. Thence what desperate Toil,
By Flagellation and the Rage of Blows, 470
To rouse the *Venus* loitering in his Veins !
Fruitless, for *Venus* unsolicited

40 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

The kindest smiles, abhorring painful Rites.

Cease, reverend Fathers ! from those youthful Sports

Retire, before unfinish'd Feats betray 475

Your slacken'd Nerves. The hoary Years, design'd

For Wisdom, for sedate Philosophy

And Contemplation, ill agree with Love.

Chearful retire : nor grudge in peevish Saws,

Like envious Monitors, the sprightly Joys 480

Of lusty Youth. You had your genial Time

Of Pleasure !—Ours is on the rapid Wing!

AND you, whose youthful Blood impetuous rolls,

With generous Spirits fraught and kindly Balm,

Husband your Vigour well ; if aught or Health, 485

Or Off-spring numerous, beautiful, and strong,

Or

Or Pleasure weigh. For from the trite Embrace
Follow faint Relaxation, Strength impair'd,
Disgust, and mutual Apathy, Love's Bane.

Some boast, I know, their Vigour to renew 490

And keen Desire, by Food restorative

Or Pharmacy more noxious. *Orchis* hence,

Lascivious Bulb, *Satyrium* better nam'd;

And that maritime, which the sea-born Queen

Feeds with her native Sponge, *Eryngo* mild; 495

Boletus, fam'd among the fungous Tribe;

And fell *Cantharides*; in various Forms

Are tried. But what ensues? Diseases more

Than ever burden'd *Auster's* dropping Wings.

Cold Tremors, Spasms, and *Cephalæa's* dire; 500

Eternal Waste of Nature's balmy Dew;

Tubes, and gaunt *Marasmus*; hideous Loss
 Of godlike Reason; and th' imprison'd Rage
 Of fierce *Lipyria*, whose collected Fires
 The Vitals only seize. Or if the Sons 505
 Of jaded Luxury those Plagues escape,
 They waste their melting Youth, and bring grey

Hairs

Before their Time; grey Hairs and idle Years.

Leave Nature to herself, nor covet more

Than Nature gives, that but to real Wants 510

Each well-conducted Appetite provokes.

But chiefly thee, fair Nymph, it boots to know,
 That Love and Joy when in their Prime most fear
 Decay, the Fate of all created Things.

Be frugal then ; the coyly-yielded Kifs 515

Charms most, and gives the most sincere Delight.

Cheapness offends ; hence on bought *Phryne's* Lip

No Rapture hangs, however fair she seem,

However form'd for *Love and amorous Play*.—

Hail ! *Modesty* ! fair female Honour, hail ! 520

Beauty's chief Ornament, without whose Charm

Beauty disgusts ; or gives but vulgar Joys.

Celestial *Maid* ! be it lawful that with Lips

Profane I name thee ; and in wanton Song.

But in these vicious Days great *Nature's* Laws 525

Are spurn'd ; eternal *Virtue*, which nor Time

Nor Place can change, nor Custom changing all,

Is mock'd to Scorn ; and *lewd Abuse* instead,

Daughter of Night, her shameless Revels holds

44 THE OECONOMY OF LOVE:

O'er half the Globe, while the chaste Face of Day
Eclipses at her Rites. For Man with Man, 531

And Man with Woman (monstrous to relate!)

Leaving the natural Road, themselves debase

With Deeds unseemly, and Dishonour foul.

Britons, for Shame! be Male and Female still.

Banish this foreign Vice; it grows not here; 536

It dies, neglected; and in Clime so chaste

Cannot but by forc'd Cultivation thrive:

So cultivated, swells the more our Shame,

The more our Guilt. And shall not greater Guilt

Meet greater Punishment and heavier Doom? 541

Not lighter for Delay. Did Justice spare

The Men of *Sodom* erst? Like us they sinn'd;

Like us they sought the Paths of monstrous Joy;

Till, urg'd to Wrath at last, all-patient Heaven

Descending wrapt them in sulphureous Storm. 546

And where proud Palaces appear'd, the Haunts

Of Luxury, now sleeps a fullen Pool:

Vengeful Memorial of Almighty Ire,

Against the Sons of Lewdness exercis'd. 550

T H E E N D.

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